

Technical  
Report  
71-11

## Leadership Actions As Evaluated by Experienced Company-Grade Officers

Joseph A. Olmstead, Larry L. Lackey,  
and Harold E. Christensen

**HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH ORGANIZATION**  
300 North Washington Street • Alexandria, Virginia 22314



June 1971

Reproduced by  
**NATIONAL TECHNICAL  
INFORMATION SERVICE**  
Springfield, Va. 22151



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

CRDBES

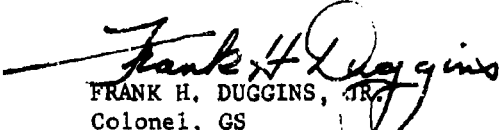
22 June 1971

SUBJECT: Leadership Actions as Evaluated by Experienced Company-Grade Officers

TO: ADMINISTRATOR  
DEFENSE DOCUMENTATION CENTER  
ATTN: TCA (HEALY)  
CAMERON STATION, BLDG. 5  
ALEXANDRIA, VA. 22314

1. The overall goal in Work Unit FORGE, Factors in Military Organizational Effectiveness, is to identify and discover ways of controlling human factors that influence the effectiveness of military organizations. One aspect of the data collection for this Work Unit involved the use of a questionnaire to determine the desirability of certain leader actions for battalion commanders, company commanders, and platoon leaders, as judged by experienced senior company-grade officers.
2. Random samples of officers attending Officers Advanced Courses at the US Army Infantry and Armor Schools rated 36 leader actions in terms of their desirability at different command levels. The results of the study showed that experienced officers increasingly prefer a decentralized leadership as the level moves up the chain of command. Neither source of commission (ROTC and OCS) or branch of service differentially affect experienced officers' evaluations of leader behavior.
3. This report should be of interest to those concerned with providing a concrete and realistic foundation for leadership doctrine and training in command levels examined by this study.

FOR THE CHIEF OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:

  
FRANK H. DUGGINS, JR.  
Colonel, GS  
Chief, Behavioral Sciences  
Division

**BLANK PAGE**

1. Report No. Technical Report 71-11		2. Government Accession No.		3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Leadership Actions as Evaluated by Experienced Company-Grade Officers				5. Report Date June 1971	
7. Author(s) Joseph A. Olmstead, Larry L. Lackey, and Harold E. Christensen				6. Performing Organization Code FORGE	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) 300 North Washington Street Alexandria, Virginia 22314				8. Performing Organization Report No.	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address Office of the Chief of Research and Development Department of the Army Washington, D.C. 20310				10. Work Unit No. Work Unit No. 13-22	
				11. Contract or Grant No. DAHC 19-70-C-0012	
				13. Type of Report and Period Covered	
				14. Sponsoring Agency Code	
15. Supplementary Notes Work Unit FORGE HumRRO Division No. 4, Fort Benning, Georgia					
16. Abstract <p>The study was designed to determine (a) the desirability of certain leader actions for battalion commanders, company commanders, and platoon leaders, and (b) possible effects of source of commission (ROTC and OCS) and branch specialty (Infantry, Armor, and Army Aviation) upon the judged desirability of leader actions. Random samples of experienced officers attending Officer Advanced Courses at the Army Infantry and Armor Schools rated 36 leader actions on desirability for the three command levels. No differences were found between groups differentiated according to source of commission and branch specialty. Differences were found in desirability ratings for the three command levels in relation to mission accomplishment, with increased decentralization desired as command level goes up. Differences also occurred between functional groupings. It was concluded that experienced officers possess a firm view of desirable and undesirable actions for leaders, discriminating between command levels and preferring decentralized, positively motivating leadership.</p>					
17. Key Words Centralized Actions      Leadership Command Level          Requirements Decentralized Actions    Leadership Leader Actions           Training Leader Behavior          Motivation			18. Distribution Statement  Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		
19. Security Classif. (of this report) Unclassified		20. Security Classif. (of this page) Unclassified		21. No. of Pages	
				22. Price	

The Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) is a nonprofit corporation established in 1969 to conduct research in the field of training and education. It is a continuation of The George Washington University Human Resources Research Office. HumRRO's general purpose is to improve human performance, particularly in organizational settings, through behavioral and social science research, development, and consultation. HumRRO's mission in work performed under contract with the Department of the Army is to conduct research in the fields of training, motivation and leadership.

The contents of this paper are not to be construed as an official Department of the Army position, unless so designated by other authorized documents.

Published  
June 1971  
by  
HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH ORGANIZATION  
300 North Washington Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

## FOREWORD

The primary purpose of the research reported here was to determine the desirability of certain empirically derived leader actions for battalion commanders, company commanders, and platoon leaders, as evaluated by experienced Army officers. Additional purposes were to determine the effects of source of commission, and of service in Infantry, Armor, and Army Aviation units, upon the judged desirability of leader actions.

The report describes the results of a reanalysis of data collected in a study by CPT Frederick W. Timmerman, Jr., in support of Work Unit FORGE and in partial fulfillment of requirements for completion of the human factors elective of the Infantry Officer Advanced Course, U.S. Army Infantry School. The questionnaire used in the study was developed by MAJ Allen Pasco, also in partial fulfillment of requirements for the human factors elective. Supervision of the study was performed under Technical Advisory Service and reanalysis of the data was carried out under Work Unit FORGE by HumRRO Division No. 4 at Fort Benning, Georgia. Dr. T.O. Jacobs is Director of the Division and Dr. J.A. Olmstead is FORGE Work Unit Leader. Military liaison and support were provided by the U.S. Army Infantry Human Research Unit of which LTC Chester I. Christie is Chief. PFC Louis E. DeGreeff assisted in the analysis of the data.

HumRRO research for the Department of the Army is conducted under Contract DAHC 19-70-C-0012. Basic Research is performed under Army Project 2Q061102B74B.

Meredith P. Crawford  
President  
Human Resources Research Organization

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

---

### **MILITARY PROBLEM**

Military leadership is the process of influencing individuals and organizations in order to obtain desired results. In this view of leadership, the effectiveness of a leader is determined by the nature of his actions and by their effects upon the individuals he attempts to influence.

This emphasis upon the effectiveness of leader actions makes it important to know what kinds of actions possess the greatest likelihood of success. An equally important question is whether effective performance at different command levels requires different leader behavior. Knowledge concerning such issues would provide a concrete and realistic foundation for leadership doctrine and training.

### **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relative desirability of 36 selected leader actions for battalion commanders, company commanders, and platoon leaders, as judged by a representative group of senior company-grade officers. Additional objectives were to determine whether Infantry, Armor, and Army Aviation officers evaluate leader actions differently and whether source of commission (ROTC and OCS) is a determinant of differential evaluation of leader actions.

### **METHOD**

Random samples of officers attending the Officer Advanced Courses of the U.S. Army Infantry School and the U.S. Army Armor School during Fiscal Year 1970 completed a questionnaire in which respondents were required to rate 36 descriptions of leader behavior in terms of their desirability as actions for a battalion commander, company commander, and platoon leader. (Officers who attend the Advanced Courses must have achieved the rank of captain, and most have served as platoon leaders and company commanders.) Officers were classified as Infantry, Armor, or Aviation, according to type of unit in which they had predominantly served. Within these categories, subjects were further classified according to the source of their commissions (ROTC and OCS). A total of 154 officers participated in the study.

For purposes of analysis, each of the leader actions was assigned to one of four "functional areas," according to a modification of Bales' category system for Interaction Process Analysis. The functional areas were:

- (1) Task Centralized Actions. Those actions concerned with the mission or task and centering authority or responsibility in the leader.
- (2) Task Decentralized Actions. Those actions concerned with the mission or task and decentralizing authority or responsibility to subordinates.
- (3) Social-Emotional Positive Actions. Those actions affecting principally the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel and usually interpreted as positive or rewarding.
- (4) Social-Emotional Negative Actions. Those actions affecting principally the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel and usually interpreted as negative or punishing.

Ratings by the various officer groups of the desirability of the leader actions for each of three "levels of command" (battalion commander, company commander, and platoon leader) were compared on the basis of functional area scores through the use of

analysis of variance procedures. In addition, differences between level-of-command ratings for each separate leader action were compared.

## PRINCIPAL RESULTS

(1) No differences were found between Infantry, Armor, and Aviation officers in their evaluations of leader actions.

(2) No differences were found between officers commissioned from ROTC and those commissioned from OCS.

(3) No interaction (i.e., difference due to particular combinations) was found between branch specialty (Infantry, Armor, and Aviation) and source of commission. (This permitted, for further analysis, combination of the officer categories into a single group representing senior company-grade officers in the combat arms of the U.S. Army.)

(4) For the combined group, significant differences were found between functional areas and between rated command levels, and significant interaction was found between functional areas and command levels, indicating that officers rated command levels differentially within functional areas.

(5) Task Centralized actions were judged to be more desirable for platoon leaders than for company commanders, and more desirable for company commanders than for battalion commanders.

(6) Task Decentralized actions were rated as more desirable for battalion commanders than for company commanders, and more desirable for company commanders than for platoon leaders.

(7) For both battalion commanders and company commanders, Task Decentralized actions were judged to be significantly more desirable than Task Centralized actions, although the categories were rated equally desirable for platoon leaders.

(8) For all command levels, Social-Emotional Positive actions received ratings approaching desirable. These actions were judged more desirable for platoon leaders than for company commanders, however, and more desirable for company commanders than for battalion commanders.

(9) For all command levels, Social-Emotional Negative actions were rated least desirable among the functional areas. This type of action was judged significantly less desirable for platoon leaders than for company commanders and battalion commanders. For the latter two levels no differences were found.

(10) For individual leader actions, findings of differences and of no differences were specific to the nature of the actions.

(11) Although differences between command levels were found for many leader actions, no action was judged to be desirable for one command level but undesirable for another, indicating that perceived differences between levels are matters of degree only.

## CONCLUSIONS

(1) The results represent the best experience-based judgments of senior company-grade officers concerning the most desirable ways to lead. Accordingly, the results provide a sound basis for realistic leadership doctrine and training for the command levels examined in the study.

(2) The results concerned with desirability of leader actions for battalion commanders provide clear indications of the ways senior company-grade officers prefer to be led.



---

(3) For all levels, the most preferred pattern is that of a leader who invites the opinions and suggestions of subordinates but makes his own decisions in his own area of responsibility. After he makes his decisions and assigns missions or tasks, he allows subordinates to do their work without detailed supervision and to make decisions freely, within their own areas of responsibility. He provides subordinates with clear definitions of the performance expected of them and rewards them on the basis of accomplishment. The leader's actions are generally supportive of subordinates, and he avoids punitive or threatening behavior wherever possible. This general pattern of leadership, considered desirable by experienced, senior company-grade officers, is fully consistent with those styles of leadership found to be effective by most accepted authorities.

(4) Differences between command levels are more desirable for actions directly related to the mission or task than for those concerned with general maintenance of motivation or emotional support. The desired pattern is one of progressively greater decentralization of task activities as level moves up the chain of command. For the most part, actions concerned with positive motivation and emotional support are seen as desirable, and actions which are punitive and negatively motivating are undesirable for all levels.

(5) The results confirm the value of emphasis upon leader actions, as opposed to personal attributes, for understanding the components of effective leadership.

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	3
<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b> .....	4
<b>METHOD</b> .....	4
The Questionnaire .....	4
Questionnaire Development .....	5
Format .....	6
Subjects and Procedure .....	6
Analysis .....	7
Functional Area Scores .....	7
Group Comparisons .....	7
<b>RESULTS</b> .....	7
Characteristics of Subjects .....	7
Group Comparisons .....	8
Item Comparisons .....	12
<b>DISCUSSION</b> .....	23
<b>LITERATURE CITED</b> .....	29
<b>Appendices</b>	
A Functional Area Scales .....	31
B Leader Action Questionnaire .....	33
<b>Figure</b>	
1 Functional Area Scores for Command Levels .....	12
<b>Tables</b>	
1 Characteristics of Subjects .....	9
2 Mean Functional Area Scores .....	9
3 Analysis of Variance for Functional Area Scores .....	10
4 Analysis of Variance for Simple Main Effects Within Command Levels and Functional Areas .....	10
5 Tests for Differences Between Functional Areas Within Command Levels .....	11
6 Tests for Differences Between Command Levels Within Functional Areas .....	11
7 Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels .....	13

**Leadership Actions As Evaluated by  
Experienced Company-Grade Officers**

## INTRODUCTION

Military leadership is the process of influencing the actions of individuals and organizations in order to obtain desired results (1, p. 7). This definition implies that a leader must act and his actions must effectively influence others, if he is to obtain the results he desires. Therefore, whether a leader will be effective is determined by the nature of his actions and by the effects of his actions upon the individuals he attempts to influence.

In this view of leadership, emphasis is placed upon the actions of the leader rather than upon his personal attributes. While it is recognized that personal attributes contribute to the effectiveness of leadership behavior, it is more productive for practical application to understand what a leader does and why his actions are successful or unsuccessful than merely to describe the relatively enduring and invariant personal characteristics of ideal leaders for purposes of emulation. Concentration upon leader behavior and its effects produces concrete information which can readily be adapted by leaders and potential leaders for practical application to real problems.

However, emphasis upon leader actions raises several important questions. First, what actions possess the greatest likelihood for success? An effective leader diagnoses each situation he encounters and supplies those actions which, according to his assessment, have the greatest probability of obtaining desired results (2). Both experience and research (3) indicate that, even though leader behavior must be situation-specific, some kinds of actions are generally more effective than others in obtaining desired performance from subordinates. Accordingly, it is important to know the nature of such actions.

An equally important question is whether effective performance at different command levels requires different leader behavior. It has long been conjectured that there are, at least, qualitative differences—that is, differences in the kinds of required leadership behavior—between levels; however, the exact nature of these differences has not been specified. For a completely behavior oriented approach to leadership, this information is essential.

The principal purpose of this study was to obtain answers to these two questions. To accomplish this purpose, it was decided to solicit the judgments of senior company-grade officers. An action-based approach to leadership must rest upon concrete knowledge about the effectiveness of the actions advocated, and the most reasonable source of such knowledge is those individuals who possess actual experience in their application. For this reason, experienced company-grade officers were surveyed to determine their views concerning the desirability of certain leader actions.

However, use of this method raises several additional questions which have practical consequences both for this study and for leadership training in general. One example: Does service in a particular type of organization, such as Infantry, Armor, or Aviation, influence an officer's perception of leadership requirements? Stated another way: Are leadership requirements different for Infantry, Armor, and Aviation units? The Infantry is a *man-ascendant* system, requiring manpower in large numbers but without much specialization. Armor and Aviation units, on the other hand, are *machine-ascendant* systems, requiring smaller numbers of more specialized personnel than a man-ascendant system. The resultant variations in organization, techniques, and required skills possess the potential for differing relationships between personnel and, conceivably, for differing

Preceding page blank

leadership requirements. Knowledge of such differences, if any, would have significant consequences for the results of this study and for the design of instruction preparatory for leadership within the three types of units.

Another question is whether officers commissioned from the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) differ in their views of leadership from those commissioned from Officer Candidate Schools (OCS). Since the majority of Army officers are commissioned from ROTC and OCS, knowledge of any differences would be useful both for interpretation of the results of this study and for instruction in leadership for the two groups.

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The principal objective was to determine the relative desirability of certain leader actions for battalion commanders, company commanders, and platoon leaders, as judged by a representative group of experienced Army officers. Additional objectives were to determine whether Infantry, Armor, and Army Aviation officers evaluate leader actions differently and whether source of commission (ROTC and OCS) is a determinant of differential evaluation of leader actions.

Specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

- (1) What is the relative desirability of 36 common leader actions for battalion commanders, company commanders, and platoon leaders?
- (2) What is the relative desirability of types of leader actions classified according to the functions served?
- (3) Which leadership actions are equally desirable for all three command levels?
- (4) Which leadership actions are differentially desirable for the three command levels?
- (5) Do Infantry, Armor, and Army Aviation officers evaluate the desirability of leader actions differently?
- (6) Do officers commissioned from ROTC evaluate the desirability of leader actions differently from officers commissioned from OCS?

## **METHOD**

To accomplish the objectives described in the preceding section, samples of officers attending the Officer Advanced Courses at the U.S. Army Infantry School (USAIS) and the U.S. Army Armor School (USAAS) during Fiscal Year 1970 were asked to complete a questionnaire in which respondents were required to rate 36 descriptions of leader behavior in terms of desirability as actions for a battalion commander, company commander, and platoon leader, respectively.

Officers who attend the Advanced Courses usually possess several years' experience as platoon leaders, company commanders, and battalion staff officers. In these positions they have also served as subordinates of battalion commanders.

## **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire was designed to elicit ratings of actual leader actions and to permit analyses of both responses to individual items and scores for functional area scales.

## Questionnaire Development

The purpose was to develop a questionnaire that would be relevant for military personnel and also conceptually sound. To obtain a pool of relevant items, 180 members of Infantry Officer Advanced Class No. 68-1 (USAIS) were requested to list 10 behaviors frequently exhibited by battalion commanders, battalion staff officers, and company commanders, and to rank the behaviors in order of desirability. The behavior descriptions thus obtained provided a pool of genuine leader actions from which items could be selected for inclusion in the questionnaire.

Bales' (4) categories for interaction process analysis served as the conceptual basis for item selection. Bales' system sets up 12 categories that encompass most of the behavior exhibited by group members during problem-solving interaction. These categories, in turn, are grouped into four broad functional areas: (a) Task-Oriented Questions, (b) Task-Oriented Answers, (c) Social-Emotional Positive Actions, and (d) Social-Emotional Negative Actions.

For the present study, Bales' system was adapted for a military context. Leader actions were selected from the item pool on the basis of relevancy to each of Bales' 12 categories. For a military operational context, two of Bales' functional areas were renamed. Thus, in the questionnaire used in the study described here, items can be grouped into four functional areas:

- (1) Task Centralized Actions (TC)—Those actions which are concerned mainly with the mission, task, or work and which serve to increase personal control of the leader, or otherwise to center authority or responsibility in the command level being evaluated.
- (2) Task Decentralized Actions (TD)—Those actions which are concerned mainly with the mission, task, or work and which serve to decentralize authority and responsibility, or otherwise to increase the contribution of subordinates.
- (3) Social-Emotional Positive Actions (SE+)—Those actions which principally affect the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel (superiors, peers, subordinates) and which are usually interpreted as positive or rewarding.
- (4) Social-Emotional Negative Actions (SE-)—Those actions which principally affect the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel (superiors, peers, subordinates) and which are usually interpreted as negative or punishing.

Items were randomly distributed within the questionnaire and were not identified as related to any functional areas. However, such classification permits recovery of data by area, and computation of area scores makes it possible to compare desirability of actions according to functions served.

Forty-five leader actions were selected for inclusion. The questionnaire was then administered to 160 members of Infantry Officer Advanced Class No. 68-2 (USAIS). Respondents were required to rate the desirability of each item for battalion commanders and company commanders on a six-point scale, ranging from Very Undesirable to Very Desirable. Comments and data from the administration of the questionnaire were analyzed and each item was evaluated for reliability, clarity, and content validity. After faulty items were discarded, 36 descriptions of leader actions were retained. These descriptions are listed by functional area scales in Appendix A.

Thus, the items contained in the questionnaire were descriptive of actual leader actions, as provided by experienced officers and selected on the basis of an extensively tested conceptual framework. Both the items and the response procedure were pretested with subjects similar to those participating in this study.

## Format

The format of the questionnaire is illustrated in Appendix B. Respondents were required to judge each of the 36 actions in terms of its desirability for each of three command levels—battalion commander, company commander, and platoon leader. Respondents were instructed to rate each action by recording a number (indicating degree of desirability) in a blank space next to each of the command levels listed below the action description. The desirability scale and the values corresponding to each alternative were:

Very Undesirable	1
Undesirable	2
Slightly Undesirable	3
Slightly Desirable	4
Desirable	5
Very Desirable	6

The scale forces respondents to record a definite positive (desirable) or negative (undesirable) response for each item. Neutral or "undecided" responses were not permitted. This procedure was used to forestall a frequently noted tendency to over-respond in the central area of a scale when a midpoint alternative is provided.

The questionnaire included a cover sheet on which respondents recorded personal data, including branch of service, career specialties, rank, age, length of commissioned service, source of commission, education, and military experience according to position and time served in position. This information was needed to provide data concerning characteristics of the samples surveyed and for classifications necessary for comparisons between types of organization and sources of commission.

The questionnaire was anonymous. Respondents were not required to identify themselves by name, social security number, or class roster numbers.

## SUBJECTS AND PROCEDURE

The subjects were experienced company-grade officers enrolled in Advanced Courses of the U.S. Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia and the U.S. Army Armor School, Fort Knox, Kentucky during Fiscal Year 1970. At each school, the names of 100 officers were randomly selected from class rosters. These officers were requested to complete the questionnaire and to return it to a central collection point.

Questionnaires returned totaled 191. Of these, 28 were eliminated because responses were incomplete and 9 were discarded because source of commission (U.S. Military Academy, National Guard, direct commission) was uncommon and numbers in these source categories were too few for reliable analysis. There remained 154 questionnaires for final analysis. Characteristics of the 154 subjects are discussed in the Results section of this report.

For the purposes of this report, the term *branch specialty* is used to indicate the category within which the officers were classified as Infantry, Armor, or Aviation (it is recognized that Aviation is not officially classified as a branch and that Infantry and Armor are not considered to be career specialties). All subjects who indicated *Aviation* in the Type Unit column of the personal data form were assigned to the Aviation group; this included both Infantry and Armor aviators. Other officers were assigned to the group appropriate for their indicated branch specialty—Infantry or Armor. Officers who reported their unit as Mechanized Infantry were included in the Infantry group.

Within Infantry, Armor, or Aviation, subjects were further classified as to source of commission (ROTC and OCS). As stated, the number of officers whose commissions

derived from sources other than ROTC and OCS was negligible, and these individuals were not included in the final sample to be analyzed.

## **ANALYSIS**

Subjects rated the desirability of each leader action for three command levels. An item score is the desirability value assigned to an action for a particular command level. Therefore, for each action three scores were available for analysis. In addition, functional area scores were computed for each command level.

### **Functional Area Scores**

Appendix A shows the classification of questionnaire items by functional areas. Within each command level, a score for a functional area is the mean of item scores for all actions subsumed under that area. The use of means was necessary for comparisons between functional areas because numbers of items within areas were not equal.

### **Group Comparisons**

The study was designed to provide comparisons between command level ratings of groups of subjects who differed in branch specialty and source of commission. Comparisons were made for variables of branch specialty, source of commission, and rated level of command, and were based on six groups: Infantry—OCS, Infantry—ROTC, Armor—OCS, Armor—ROTC, Aviation—OCS, and Aviation—ROTC.

The main analysis involved a comparison between functional area scores of these six groups for the three command levels, using analysis of variance procedures with a least-squares solution for groups containing unequal numbers of subjects. This method permits analysis of the group variables in relation to their effects upon desirability ratings for each command level and each functional area.

For variables where differences were found, comparisons were also made for each leadership action separately. This permitted determination of the specific actions which contributed to the differences, if any, and provided data concerning the relative desirability of specific actions for each command level.

## **RESULTS**

The results will be presented according to the analysis just described. Characteristics of the subjects will be reported. Functional area scores will be compared according to the principal variables. An analysis of the relative desirability of the various functions for each command level will be discussed. The relative desirability of specific leadership actions will be reported.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBJECTS**

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the subjects who participated in the study. Of particular relevance are age and length of commissioned service. Mean age was 28.6 years, and mean length of commissioned service for the total sample was 5.3 years. It can be concluded that the subjects were mature, mainly senior company-grade officers, with service sufficient to have experienced the leadership actions of platoon leaders, company commanders, and battalion commanders and, themselves, to have performed as both



platoon leaders and company commanders. The number of subjects reporting combat experience as an officer totaled 134. Thus, the subjects possessed the capabilities for providing valid evaluations of leadership actions for the command levels examined in this study.

## GROUP COMPARISONS

Mean functional area scores for each group are shown in Table 2, and analysis of variance results are presented in Table 3. As shown in Table 3, no significant differences were found between branch specialties and between sources of commission. Infantry, Armor, and Aviation officers were similar in their ratings of the desirability of the various leader actions. In the same way, source of commission had no effects upon ratings. Since no interaction was found between branch specialty and source of commission, it is permissible to combine the groups for further comparisons between ratings of command levels and between functional areas.

As shown in Table 3, significant differences were found between desirability of leader actions for different command levels and between functional areas. In addition, significant interaction was found between command levels and functional areas. The interaction indicates that subjects rated command levels differentially within functional areas.

To further identify sources of differences, a test was performed for simple main effects of functional areas at each level of command. Table 4 presents the analysis of variance table for simple main effects, and Table 5 presents *t* tests (correlated samples) for differences between functional areas within each level. The results show no significant differences between Task Decentralized and Social-Emotional Negative for company commanders and between Task Centralized and Task Decentralized for platoon leaders. Differences occurred between all other functional areas for all command levels.

Finally, Table 6 presents the results of *t* tests (correlated samples) for differences between command levels for each functional area. The table shows that differences between command levels were found for all functional areas, with the single exception that battalion commanders and company commanders did not differ for Social-Emotional Negative. For this functional area, mean scores for these command levels were identical.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of functional area score means and the differences between command levels for each area. It can be seen from Figure 1 that Task Centralized actions were judged most desirable for platoon leaders and least desirable for battalion commanders. The judged desirability of such actions for company commanders was intermediate to the other two levels.

Task Decentralized actions were judged to be most desirable for battalion commanders and least desirable for platoon leaders. Again, the mean for company commanders is intermediate to the other two levels. For both battalion commanders and company commanders, decentralized task actions were judged to be significantly more desirable than centralized ones. On the other hand, Task Decentralized actions were rated only slightly more desirable than Task Centralized actions for platoon leaders, the difference not being significant (see Table 5).

Although the desirability of Social-Emotional Positive actions was different for each command level, all levels received relatively high scores. This type of positive, facilitative behavior was judged most desirable for platoon leaders and only slightly, but significantly, less desirable for company commanders. Even though Social-Emotional Positive actions were rated less desirable for battalion commanders than for the other two levels, the mean rating still approaches the Desirable point on the scale.

Table 1  
Characteristics of Subjects

Variable	Infantry		Armor		Aviation		Total (N=154)
	ROTC (N=26)	OCS (N=32)	ROTC (N=30)	OCS (N=26)	ROTC (N=15)	OCS (N=26)	
Rank							
Captain	21	29	29	26	12	21	137
Major	4	3	1	1	3	5	17
Mean Age (Years)	28.6	29.8	27.6	28.9	27.9	29.1	28.6
Mean Com- missioned Service (Years)	5.8	5.6	4.8	4.3	5.5	5.5	5.3
Mean Educa- tion (Years)	18.9	14.1	18.1	13.4	16.0	13.7	14.9

Table 2  
Mean Functional Area Scores

Command Levels and Functional Areas <sup>a</sup>	Infantry				Armor				Aviation				Total N=154	
	ROTC N=26		OCS N=32		ROTC N=30		OCS N=26		ROTC N=15		OCS N=26			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>Bn Cmdr</b>														
TC	4.40	.53	4.18	.53	4.35	.56	4.46	.59	4.11	.65	4.19	.56	4.29	.68
TD	5.09	.56	4.87	.64	4.99	.49	5.02	.50	5.05	.56	5.02	.37	4.99	.53
SE+	4.89	.40	4.71	.65	4.81	.51	4.90	.48	4.83	.59	4.66	.56	4.79	.53
SE-	3.89	.49	3.85	.48	4.11	.53	4.03	1.83	3.86	.47	3.91	.55	3.95	.84
<b>Co Cmdr</b>														
TC	4.67	.51	4.42	.62	4.64	.55	4.63	.58	4.47	.46	4.44	.60	4.55	.41
TD	4.92	.51	4.86	.62	4.82	.48	4.84	.51	4.91	.56	4.93	.46	4.87	.51
SE+	4.99	.39	4.86	.34	4.91	.51	4.98	.43	4.90	.49	4.80	.52	4.81	.36
SE-	3.99	.57	3.82	.47	4.09	.55	4.04	.59	3.81	.46	3.89	.53	3.95	.84
<b>Plt Ldr</b>														
TC	4.80	.51	4.39	.58	4.79	.56	4.68	.55	4.69	.45	4.61	.59	4.65	.55
TD	4.81	.50	4.76	.62	4.69	.51	4.57	.63	4.72	.56	4.67	.54	4.70	.42
SE+	5.02	.39	4.88	.34	4.93	.46	5.03	.39	4.93	.51	4.85	.54	4.94	.42
SE-	3.93	.56	3.81	.44	4.02	.42	3.95	.56	3.77	.51	3.89	.54	3.90	.49

<sup>a</sup>TC=Task Centralized; TD=Task Decentralized; SE+=Social-Emotional Positive; SE-=Social-Emotional Negative.

Table 3  
Analysis of Variance for Functional Area Scores

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	p
<b>Between Subjects</b>				
A (Branch Career Specialty)	2	1.59	1.29	NS
B (Source of Commission)	1	2.74	2.22	NS
AB	2	.96	< 1	NS
Subjects within groups	148	1.23		
<b>Within Subjects</b>				
C (Command Levels)	2	.82	15.50	<.01
AC	4	.07	1.75	NS
BC	2	.04	1.00	NS
ABC	4	.04	1.00	NS
C x Subjects within groups	296	.04		
D (Functional Areas)	3	90.08	204.72	<.01
AD	6	.61	1.38	NS
BD	3	.16	< 1	NS
ABD	6	.25	< 1	NS
D x Subjects within groups	444	.44		
CD	6	3.02	27.45	<.01
ACD	12	.08	< 1	NS
BCD	6	.11	1.00	NS
ABCD	12	.04	< 1	NS
CD x Subjects within groups	888	.11		

Table 4  
Analysis of Variance for Simple Main Effects  
Within Command Levels and Functional Areas

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	p
<b>Within Subjects</b>				
Between functional areas at Battalion Commander level	3	34.8	158.1	<.01
Between functional areas at Company Commander level	3	30.3	133.1	<.01
Between functional areas at Platoon Leader level	3	30.9	140.4	<.01
Residual	1332	.22		

Table 5  
Tests for Differences Between Functional Areas  
Within Command Levels<sup>a</sup>

	Battalion Commander		Company Commander		Platoon Leader	
	t	p	t	p	t	p
TC vs. TD	10.19	<.01	6.14	<.01	.93	NS
TC vs. SE+	7.24	<.01	8.19	<.01	5.17	<.01
TC vs. SE-	3.94	<.01	11.32	<.01	12.45	<.01
TD vs. SE+	3.40	<.01	.67	NS	5.03	<.01
TD vs. SE-	15.11	<.01	15.85	<.01	15.36	<.01
SE+ vs. SE-	10.62	<.01	19.12	<.01	19.90	<.01

<sup>a</sup>df = 152 for all comparisons.

Table 6  
Tests for Differences Between Command Levels  
Within Functional Areas

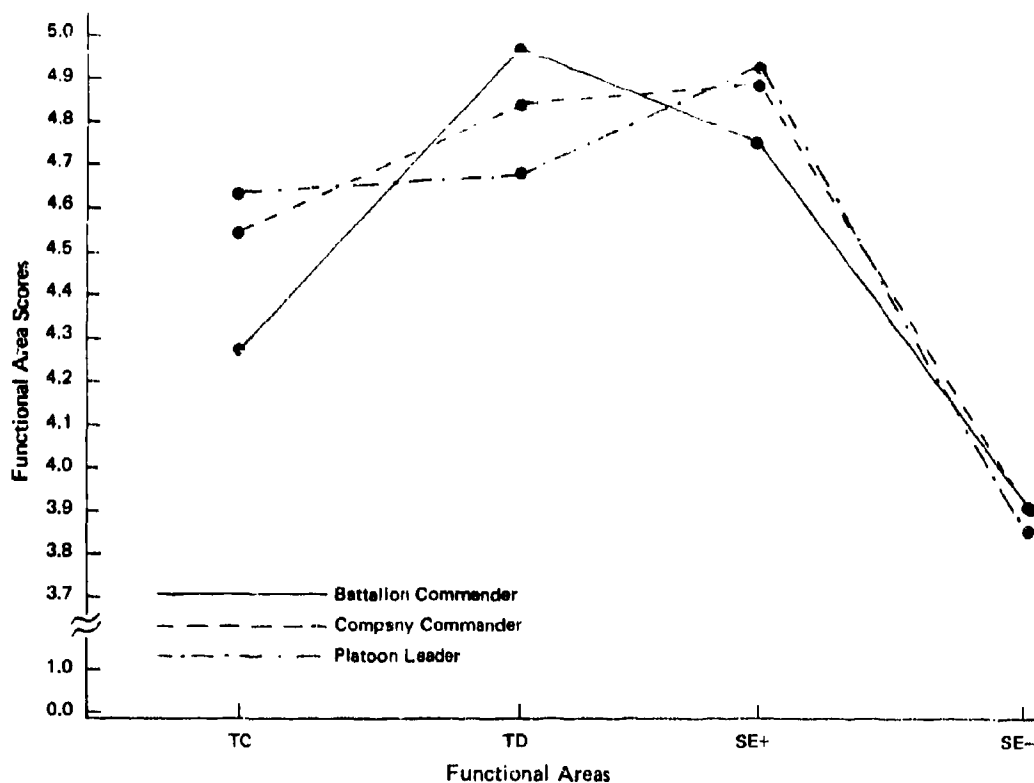
Command Levels	Functional Areas <sup>a</sup>							
	Task Centralized		Task Decentralized		Social Emotional Positive		Social Emotional Negative	
	t	p	t	p	t	p	t	p
Battalion Commander vs. Company Commander	10.76	<.01	4.58	<.01	6.91	<.01	0.00	NS
Battalion Commander vs. Platoon Leader	10.45	<.01	6.99	<.01	6.18	<.01	1.99	<.05
Company Commander vs. Platoon Leader	4.47	<.01	5.49	<.01	2.33	<.01	2.94	<.01

<sup>a</sup>df = 152 for all comparisons.

For all command levels, Social-Emotional Negative was rated least desirable among the functional areas. No difference was found between battalion commanders and company commanders, and it was judged less desirable for platoon leaders to exhibit this type of behavior than for the other two levels. For all levels, means in this area clustered somewhat below Slightly Desirable.

It is important to note that means for only one functional area—Social-Emotional Negative—were below 4.00 (Slightly Desirable). This finding suggests that no functional areas were viewed as totally objectionable by respondents. On the other hand, certain specific actions within areas were judged to be undesirable, as will be shown in the following section.

### Functional Area Scores for Command Levels



Note: TC = Task Centralized; TD = Task Decentralized; SE+ = Social-Emotional Positive; SE- = Social-Emotional Negative

Figure 1

### ITEM COMPARISONS

Table 7 shows mean ratings of each leader action for the three command levels. In general, item means follow the trends found for functional areas (see Table 2). For example, the greatest number of items receiving lower ratings are found in the Social-Emotional Negative area. However, it is also apparent that there is considerable variability among items within functional areas.

Especially noteworthy is the relative uniformity of judgments between levels. Although significant differences between levels were found for many leader actions, for only one item was there as much as one point difference between the highest and lowest means. No action was judged to be undesirable for one command level and desirable for others, or vice versa, indicating that officers view specific actions as universally desirable or undesirable for all rated levels. Perceived differences between levels appear to be matters of degree only.

Table 7  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Task Centralized (TC)</b>				
Coordinates work of subordinate officers (5).				
A. Battalion Commander	4.27	1.67		
B. Company Commander	4.95	1.20	4.23	<.01
C. Platoon Leader	4.92	1.26	.19	NS
A vs. C			3.99	<.01
Makes most decisions without consulting subordinate officers (17).				
A. Battalion Commander	3.23	1.30		
B. Company Commander	3.36	1.24	.89	NS
C. Platoon Leader	3.36	1.26	.00	NS
A vs. C			.89	NS
Provides information about the task or mission (19).				
A. Battalion Commander	5.80	.57		
B. Company Commander	5.81	.57	.10	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.78	.66	.37	NS
A vs. C			.28	NS
Closely supervises every detail of missions he assigns (20).				
A. Battalion Commander	3.25	1.48		
B. Company Commander	3.77	1.45	3.14	<.01
C. Platoon Leader	4.39	1.44	3.73	<.01
A vs. C			6.85	<.01
Suggests ways to accomplish mission (22).				
A. Battalion Commander	4.88	.99		
B. Company Commander	5.13	.80	2.40	<.05
C. Platoon Leader	5.09	.98	.51	NS
A vs. C			1.73	NS

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Checks on every step of subordinate's execution of assignments (28).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	2.45	1.19		
			2.80	<.01
B. Company Commander	2.85	1.32		
			2.63	<.01
C. Platoon Leader	3.31	1.40		
A vs. C			5.58	<.01
<b>Gives opinions to subordinates (31).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.66	1.12		
			.20	NS
B. Company Commander	4.68	1.13		
			.74	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.58	1.18		
A vs. C			.54	NS
<b>Indicates what performance is expected of subordinates (35).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.67	.71		
			.24	NS
B. Company Commander	5.69	.71		
			.25	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.71	.66		
A vs. C			.50	NS
<b>Task Decentralized (TD)</b>				
Lets subordinates make their decisions about how to carry out the missions he assigns them (6).				
A. Battalion Commander	5.55	.72		
			3.75	<.01
B. Company Commander	5.21	.85		
			3.40	<.01
C. Platoon Leader	4.82	1.11		
A vs. C			6.75	<.01

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Makes few decisions without consulting sub- ordinate officers (11).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	3.82	1.32		
B. Company Commander	3.79	1.26	.26	NS
C. Platoon Leader	3.62	1.39	1.12	NS
A vs. C			1.34	NS
<b>Asks subordinate officers for suggestions (13).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.35	.83		
B. Company Commander	5.32	.80	.35	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.15	1.05	1.58	NS
A vs. C			1.87	NS
<b>Asks for opinions of sub- ordinates (28).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.12	.77		
B. Company Commander	5.08	.76	.37	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.05	.36	.42	NS
A vs. C			.77	NS
<b>Checks on mission ac- complishment rather than each step of its execu- tion (29).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.47	.93		
B. Company Commander	5.17	.97	2.74	<.01
C. Platoon Leader	4.80	1.22	2.94	<.01
A vs. C			5.39	<.01

(Continued)



Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	r	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Seeks information from subordinate officers about the task or mission (33).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.68	1.19		
			.46	NS
B. Company Commander	4.62	1.29		
			.31	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.66	1.29		
A vs. C			.14	NS
<b>Social-Emotional Positive (\$E+)</b> <b>Is primarily concerned with the men's safety and welfare (2).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.91	1.22		
			.83	NS
B. Company Commander	5.03	1.24		
			.73	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.13	1.24		
A vs. C			1.57	NS
<b>Maintains informal relations with subordinates (4).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.93	1.27		
			.67	NS
B. Company Commander	4.83	1.29		
			.27	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.79	1.28		
A vs. C			.93	NS
<b>Helps subordinate officers in personal matters (8).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.02	1.11		
			2.89	<.01
B. Company Commander	5.35	.89		
			.56	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.29	.94		
A vs. C			2.32	<.05
<b>Appeals for good performance (12).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.64	1.55		
			.07	NS
B. Company Commander	4.66	1.57		
			.18	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.69	1.56		
A vs. C			.26	NS

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	r	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Agrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions (15).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.58	.80		
B. Company Commander	4.50	.82	.63	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.49	.83	.13	NS
A vs. C			.72	NS
<b>Is accessible to subordinates (18).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.50	.78		
B. Company Commander	5.71	.69	2.47	<.05
C. Platoon Leader	5.75	.66	.59	NS
A vs. C			3.08	<.01
<b>Agrees with fellow officers' ideas and suggestions (18).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.38	.83		
B. Company Commander	4.40	.86	.13	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.42	.89	.26	NS
A vs. C			.40	NS
<b>Displays a sense of humor (21).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.23	.79		
B. Company Commander	5.26	.76	.37	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.31	.73	.53	NS
A vs. C			1.90	NS
<b>Rewards and praises subordinates for their accomplishments (23).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.71	.55		
B. Company Commander	5.74	.53	.42	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.79	.49	.89	NS
A vs. C			1.30	NS

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Rewards and praises subordinates for their efforts (24).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.49	.73		
B. Company Commander	5.57	.84	.99	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.61	.61	.55	NS
A vs. C			1.52	NS
<b>Explains or gives reasons why things should be done (27).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.64	1.22		
B. Company Commander	4.80	1.11	1.17	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.93	1.20	.60	NS
A vs. C			2.07	<.05
<b>Agrees with senior officers' ideas and suggestions (36).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.44	.88		
B. Company Commander	4.44	.87	.07	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.50	.95	.62	NS
A vs. C			.53	NS
<b>Social-Emotional Negative (SE-)</b>				
<b>Stresses formality in his relationships with subordinates (1).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.81	.97		
B. Company Commander	4.53	1.09	2.42	<.05
C. Platoon Leader	4.32	1.23	1.52	NS
A vs. C			3.84	<.01

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p <sup>b</sup>
<b>Places the mission ahead of men's safety and welfare (3).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.93	1.27		
B. Company Commander	4.83	1.29	.87	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.79	1.29	.27	NS
A vs. C			.93	NS
<b>Is antagonistic and aggressive toward subordinates (7).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	2.05	1.19		
B. Company Commander	2.10	1.23	.33	NS
C. Platoon Leader	2.04	1.25	.41	NS
A vs. C			.09	NS
<b>Reprimands subordinates for lack of effort (9).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	5.27	.84		
B. Company Commander	5.40	.75	1.50	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.41	.84	.07	NS
A vs. C			1.49	NS
<b>Appears irritated (10).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	2.39	1.15		
B. Company Commander	2.48	1.24	.66	NS
C. Platoon Leader	2.51	1.29	.22	NS
A vs. C			.88	NS
<b>Warns subordinates against poor performance (14).</b>				
A. Battalion Commander	4.43	1.43		
B. Company Commander	4.61	1.33	1.15	NS
C. Platoon Leader	4.66	1.29	.35	NS
A vs. C			1.50	NS

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)  
Judgments of Leadership Actions by Command Levels

Leader Action <sup>a</sup>	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p <sup>b</sup>
Disagrees with fellow officers' ideas and suggestions (25).				
A. Battalion Commander	3.56	1.04		
			.32	NS
B. Company Commander	3.53	1.06		
			.00	NS
C. Platoon Leader	3.53	1.09		
A vs. C			.32	NS
Reprimands subordinates for inadequate accomplishment (30).				
A. Battalion Commander	5.15	.73		
			.78	NS
B. Company Commander	5.21	.73		
			.15	NS
C. Platoon Leader	5.20	.82		
A vs. C			.59	NS
Disagrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions (32).				
A. Battalion Commander	3.58	1.15		
			.15	NS
B. Company Commander	3.56	1.16		
			.49	NS
C. Platoon Leader	3.50	1.18		
A vs. C			.63	NS
Disagrees with senior officers' ideas and suggestions (34).				
A. Battalion Commander	3.32	1.19		
			.14	NS
B. Company Commander	3.31	1.20		
			.95	NS
C. Platoon Leader	3.18	1.20		
			1.09	NS

<sup>a</sup>The number in parenthesis following each description of leader action is questionnaire item number.

<sup>b</sup>N=154; degrees of freedom=152 for all items.

For individual items, findings of differences and of no differences were specific to the nature of the actions. Thus, officers judged it to be Desirable for both company commanders and platoon leaders to coordinate the work of subordinate officers (Item 5), but it was considered to be significantly less desirable (Slightly Desirable) for battalion commanders to do so. There was no significant difference between company commanders and platoon leaders for this item. On the other hand, for all levels, it was judged to be Slightly Undesirable for leaders to make most decisions without consulting subordinate officers (Item 17), and no differences between levels were found.

For all levels, ratings approached Very Desirable with regard to providing information about the task or mission (Item 19). Again, no differences between levels were found. In contrast, respondents viewed Item 20, "closely supervises every detail of missions he assigns" as differentially desirable for each command level. For platoon leaders, this action was rated as somewhat higher than Slightly Desirable. For company commanders, the action was judged to be significantly less desirable than for platoon leaders, and it was rated Slightly Undesirable for battalion commanders. All differences between levels are significant.

Officers rated Item 22, "suggests ways to accomplish missions," around the Desirable point for all levels; however, this action was least desirable for battalion commanders and most desirable for company commanders, with platoon leaders intermediate between the other two levels but not significantly different from either.

Ratings for Item 26, "checks on every step of subordinates' execution of assignments," were among the lowest received by any item. For all command levels, means are in the lower half of the scale. Among the levels, this action was judged to be Slightly Undesirable for platoon leaders, somewhat more undesirable for company commanders, and the most undesirable for battalion commanders. All differences between the levels were significant. On the other hand, Item 31, "gives opinion to subordinates," was rated between Slightly Desirable and Desirable for all levels, with no differences found between the levels.

For all levels, ratings for Item 35, "indicates what performance is expected of subordinates," approached Very Desirable. There were no significant differences between levels. Means for Item 35 were among the highest received, indicating that the opinions of company-grade officers are especially strong concerning the necessity for communication of performance standards to subordinates by leaders at all levels.

In the Task Decentralized area, most actions received comparatively high ratings. Thus, respondents judged it to be desirable for all levels to let subordinates make their decisions about how to carry out the missions assigned to them (Item 6). This action was considered to be the most desirable for battalion commanders, somewhat less desirable for company commanders, and least desirable for platoon leaders. Differences were significant; however, all means approached Desirable or higher on the scale.

Item 11, "makes few decisions without consulting subordinate officers," received ratings approaching Desirable for all levels, with no differences found between levels. A similar pattern was found for Item 13, "asks subordinate officers for suggestions," and Item 28, "asks for opinions of subordinates." Both actions received scores higher than Desirable for all levels.

Officers judged it to be Desirable for leaders to check on mission accomplishment rather than on each step of execution (Item 29). However, this action was considered the most desirable for battalion commanders, somewhat less desirable for company commanders, and least desirable for platoon leaders. Differences were significant between all levels. Respondents also considered it to be more than Slightly Desirable for all command levels to seek information from subordinate officers about the task or mission (Item 33).

Item 2, "is primarily concerned with the men's safety and welfare," was rated Desirable for all command levels. In the same way, it was judged equally Desirable for all levels to maintain informal relations with subordinates (Item 4). Respondents also considered it Desirable to help subordinate officers in personal matters (Item 8); however, this action was judged to be less important for battalion commanders than for company commanders and platoon leaders.

For all command levels, mean scores for Item 12, "appeals for good performance," and Item 15, "agrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions," fell between Slightly Desirable and Desirable. There were no significant differences between levels.

Officers judged it to be Very Desirable for both company commanders and platoon leaders to be accessible to subordinates (Item 16), with the rating for battalion commanders somewhat, but significantly, less than for the other two levels. On the other hand, it was judged to be only somewhat more than Slightly Desirable for leaders to agree with fellow officers' ideas and suggestions (Item 18) and no differences were found between levels. It was also judged more than Desirable for all levels to display a sense of humor (Item 21), with no differences between levels.

The use of rewards and praise has long been considered a valuable motivating device for leaders. The findings of this study confirm that belief for all levels. Item 23, "rewards and praises subordinates for their accomplishments," received mean ratings that approach Very Desirable and Item 24, "rewards and praises subordinates for their efforts," received mean scores intermediate between Desirable and Very Desirable. There were no significant differences between levels for either item. However, it is interesting to note that officers apparently feel that it is slightly more desirable to reward and praise subordinates for their accomplishments than for their efforts.

Item 27, "explains or gives reasons why things should be done," received ratings approaching Desirable for all levels; however, this action was judged more desirable for platoon leaders than for company commanders, and less desirable for battalion commanders than for company commanders and platoon leaders. The difference between battalion commander and platoon leader was significant. It was also judged more than Slightly Desirable for all levels to agree with senior officers' ideas and suggestions (Item 36). No differences occurred between levels.

Officers considered Item 1, "stresses formality in relationships with subordinates," Desirable for battalion commanders but significantly less desirable for company commanders and platoon leaders. No significant difference was found between the latter two levels. The rating for this item is somewhat paradoxical in view of the fact that the respondents also judged it Desirable for all levels to maintain informal relations with subordinates (Item 4).

Officers considered it Desirable for all levels, without significant differences, to place the mission ahead of the men's safety and welfare (Item 3). This finding contrasts with ratings for Item 2, "is primarily concerned with the men's safety and welfare," which also was judged Desirable for all levels.

The results show that officers view the display of antagonism or irritation as undesirable. Thus, Item 7, "is antagonistic and aggressive toward subordinates," was rated equally Undesirable for all command levels. Furthermore, Item 10, "appears irritated," received scores intermediate between Undesirable and Slightly Undesirable with no significant differences between levels.

In contrast, it was judged somewhat more than Desirable to reprimand subordinates for lack of effort (Item 9) and for inadequate accomplishment (Item 30). No differences between levels were found for either item. In a somewhat similar vein, Item 14, "warns subordinates against poor performance," was rated between Slightly Desirable and Desirable for all levels.

Respondents judged disagreement with the ideas and suggestions of both fellow officers (Item 25) and subordinate officers (Item 32) to be intermediate between Slightly Undesirable and Slightly Desirable for all levels. On the other hand, disagreement with senior officers' ideas and suggestions was rated closer to Slightly Undesirable for all levels.

## DISCUSSION

The evaluations of leader behavior reported herein are representative of the opinions of senior company-grade officers in the Armor and Infantry combat arms of the United States Army. Because of method of assignment, students in any single class of the Advanced Courses at the Infantry and Armor Schools are a cross-section of senior company-grade officers of the respective branches. Since the officers who participated in this study were randomly selected from Advanced Courses of the two schools, it is reasonable to conclude that their opinions are representative of officers of similar grade and experience throughout the Infantry and Armor branches. Furthermore, the officers in the samples possessed sufficient experience to have actually performed as platoon leaders and company commanders and to have been the recipients of leadership actions by battalion commanders. For these reasons, the data reported here appear to be valid, and if the considered judgments of experienced officers can be taken as sound, the results should provide useful bases for doctrine and training oriented toward the behavior of leaders.

The first question considered in this study was whether Infantry, Armor, and Aviation officers differ in their evaluations of leader behavior. The results are conclusive. The opinions of Infantry, Armor, and Aviation officers are approximately the same concerning the desirability of the actions examined in this study. It can be concluded, therefore, that service in the man-ascendant and machine-ascendant systems considered here, together with their concomitant variations in activities, techniques, and organizations, does not differentially affect officers' evaluations of leadership behavior. Rather, a pervading view of military leadership overrides any organizational differences. This finding suggests it is unnecessary to tailor leadership doctrine and training for specific branches or career specialties, and it confirms current practices in this regard. The finding further suggests that the opinions concerning leader behavior that are described in this report are equally applicable for all combat arms of the U.S. Army.

The study considered a second question: whether officers whose commissions derive from different sources differ in their evaluations of leader actions. Again, the results are conclusive. Senior company-grade officers whose source of commission was ROTC do not differ in their evaluations from officers commissioned from OCS. Here, it is important to note that the officers in the samples were senior company-grade officers whose mean commissioned service ranged from 4.3 to 5.8 years. It is possible that the intervention of Army service between the date of commissioning and date of this survey may have resulted in convergence of opinions between the two groups. Therefore, it cannot be concluded, on the basis of this study, that newly commissioned ROTC officers do not differ from newly commissioned OCS officers. This could be confirmed only by a study of the opinions of such officers. However, the finding does suggest that, if differences exist at time of commissioning, service in the Army will erase them.

It can be further concluded that, for the officers represented by the samples, educational background does not influence evaluations of leader behavior. ROTC officers reported an average of 2.5 years more college education than OCS graduates. However, the finding of no difference between the groups in their evaluations of leader actions indicates that the noted difference in educational attainment did not influence experienced officers' perceptions of the desirability of leader actions. Again, this conclusion



cannot be extended to newly commissioned officers, nor to wider differences in educational attainment.

The finding of no differences between branch specialties and between sources of commission made it permissible to pool the data for all groups, and subsequent analyses treated all of the 154 subjects who participated in the study as a single group. Accordingly, the remainder of the discussion will be concerned with the opinions of this group—experienced company-grade officers in the combat branches of the U.S. Army.

The results show that these officers possess clear and definite views concerning desirable leadership behavior. In general, the picture that emerges is one of a leader who invites the opinions and suggestions of subordinates but makes his own decisions in his area of responsibility. After he makes his decisions and assigns the missions or tasks, he allows subordinates to do their work without detailed supervision and to make decisions freely, within their own areas of responsibility. He provides subordinates with clear definitions of the performance expected of them, and gives rewards on the basis of accomplishment. The leader's actions are generally supportive of subordinates, and he avoids punitive or threatening behavior wherever possible.

It is especially noteworthy that the general pattern of leadership considered desirable by experienced company-grade officers is fully consistent with those styles of leadership found to be most effective by such highly accepted authorities as Blake (5), Likert (6), and McGregor (7). This confirms the relevance for military application of research and theory concerned with leadership and emphasizes the value to be derived from the inclusion of current concepts in leadership doctrine and training.

Despite the definite views concerning most actions, scores for several items illustrate a basic psychological conflict that is often reported by combat-experienced officers. For all command levels, it was judged Desirable to be primarily concerned with the men's safety and welfare as well as to place the mission ahead of the men's safety and welfare. Army doctrine is clear on this point. Accomplishment of the mission must be kept foremost in the thinking, planning, and activities of a commander, tempered, of course, with common sense. However, many officers report an intense emotional conflict in this regard and the data confirm its existence for the officers who participated in this study.

In the same way, officers feel it is desirable to both maintain informal relations with subordinates and to stress formality in relations with them. These results suggest another conflict that may be felt by many individuals. Officers understand the pitfalls of informal relationships with subordinates; yet there are circumstances, especially in combat, in which formality may be resented. These conflicts highlight the rather delicate balance which is required for leadership to be effective but which, often, is exceedingly difficult to identify and to maintain.

The officers represented by the sample perceive differences between command levels to be more desirable for actions directly related to the mission or task than for those concerned with general maintenance of motivation or emotional support. The desired pattern is one of progressively greater decentralization as level moves up the chain of command. Especially with regard to the battalion commanders, officers represented by the sample are unequivocal in their advocacy of consultation with subordinates prior to decisions and of allowing subordinates to execute assigned missions without detailed supervision. On the other hand, decentralization, while still desirable, is not considered to be nearly so essential for platoon leaders. Its desirability for company commanders is seen as intermediate between platoon leaders and battalion commanders.

For the most part, senior company-grade officers view actions concerned with general maintenance of positive motivation and emotional support (SE+) as desirable for all levels, although somewhat less so for battalion commanders than for company commanders and platoon leaders. Conversely, those actions which are negatively motivating (SE-) are deemed undesirable for all levels, but even less desirable for platoon

leaders than for the other two levels. For all levels, those actions that are threatening or punitive are undesirable, while those that are positive and rewarding are favored.

Careful study of the Results section, especially Table 7 will provide information concerning ratings of each of the specific leader actions included in the questionnaire.

Several implications for leadership doctrine and training are suggested by the results:

First, the data are the pooled opinions of a representative sample of senior company-grade officers. As such, they represent the best experience-based judgments of such officers concerning the most effective ways to lead. Experience is the basis for much of Army doctrine and training and, accordingly, the data presented in this report provide a sound foundation for realistic instruction in leadership for the command levels examined in this study.

A second implication is concerned with officers in leadership positions, like those represented by the sample. Leaders are most effective in influencing subordinates when their actions are congruent with the subordinates' image of good leadership (8, 9). The results bearing on the desirability of leader actions for battalion commanders provide clear indications to present and potential occupants of that role of the leadership practices deemed most effective by company-grade officers—the usual subordinates of battalion commanders. This is not to advocate “soft” leadership; the leadership practices preferred by these officers cannot, in any fashion, be construed as “soft.” Neither is this to suggest that battalion commanders should always try to please their subordinates through their leadership practices. The implication is merely that, within the officer corps, there are norms concerning desirable leadership behavior, that experienced officers discriminate between desirable and undesirable leader behavior, and that it should be useful for a leader to know what his subordinates consider to be good leadership practices.

Finally, the results confirm the value of a behavioral approach to leadership. They demonstrate that concentration upon leader actions, as opposed to personal attributes, is productive for understanding the components of effective leadership. Leader actions can be systematically identified, examined, and evaluated, and data concerning them provide a concrete and realistic foundation for the development of relevant leadership doctrine and training.

**LITERATURE CITED  
AND  
APPENDICES**

**Preceding page blank**

### LITERATURE CITED

1. Department of the Army. *Leadership at Senior Levels of Command*, DA Pamphlet 600-15, Washington, October 1968.
2. Olmstead, J.A. "The Skills of Leadership," *Military Review*, vol. 47, no. 3, March 1967, pp. 62-70.
3. Lange, C.J. and Jacobs, T.O. *Leadership in Army Infantry Platoons: Study II*, HumRRO Research Report 5, July 1960.
4. Bales, R.F. "A Set of Categories for the Analysis of Small-Group Interaction," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 15, 1950, pp. 257-263.
5. Blake, R.R. and Mouton, J.S. *The Managerial Grid*, Gulf Publishing Company, Houston, 1964.
6. Likert, R. *The Human Organization, Its Management and Value*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1967.
7. McGregor, D. *Leadership and Motivation*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, 1966.
8. Scott, E.L. *Perceptions of Organization and Leadership Behavior*, Ohio State University Research Foundation, Columbus, 1952.
9. Stogdill, R.M. and Koehler, K. *Measures of Leadership Structure and Organization Change*, Ohio State University Research Foundation, Columbus, 1952.

Preceding page blank

**BLANK PAGE**

## Appendix A

### FUNCTIONAL AREA SCALES

Item	Action
<u>Task Centralized (TC)</u>	
5	Coordinates work of subordinate officers.
17	Makes most decisions without consulting subordinate officers.
19	Provides information about the task or mission.
20	Closely supervises every detail of missions he assigns.
22	Suggests ways to accomplish mission.
26	Checks on every step of subordinate's execution of assignments.
31	Gives opinions to subordinates.
35	Indicates what performance is expected of subordinates.
<u>Task Decentralized (TD)</u>	
6	Lets subordinates make their decisions about how to carry out the missions he assigns them.
11	Makes few decisions without consulting subordinate officers.
13	Asks subordinate officers for suggestions.
28	Asks for opinions of subordinates.
29	Checks on mission accomplishment rather than on each step of its execution.
33	Seeks information from subordinate officers about the task or mission.
<u>Social-Emotional Positive (SE+)</u>	
2	Is primarily concerned with men's safety and welfare.
4	Maintains informal relations with subordinates.
8	Helps subordinate officers in personal matters.
12	Appeals for good performance.
15	Agrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions.
16	Is accessible to subordinates.
18	Agrees with fellow officers' ideas and suggestions.
21	Displays a sense of humor.
23	Rewards and praises subordinates for their accomplishments.
24	Rewards and praises subordinates for their efforts.
27	Explains or gives reasons why things should be done.
36	Agrees with senior officers' ideas and suggestions.
<u>Social-Emotional Negative (SE-)</u>	
1	Stresses formality in his relationships with subordinates.
3	Places the mission ahead of men's safety and welfare.
7	Is antagonistic and aggressive toward subordinates.
9	Reprimands subordinates for lack of effort.
(Continued)	

Preceding page blank

Item	Action
10	Appears irritated.
14	Warns subordinates against poor performance.
25	Disagrees with fellow officers' ideas and suggestions.
30	Reprimands subordinates for inadequate accomplishment.
32	Disagrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions.
34	Disagrees with senior officers' ideas and suggestions.

## Appendix B

### LEADER ACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

This Appendix presents the instructions, personal data items, and examples of functional area scales (numbers 19 and 28) taken from the Questionnaire. The full list of leader actions appears in Appendix A.

**Purpose:** To solicit the opinions of experienced Infantry and Armor officers concerning the desirability of a particular set of actions by Battalion Commanders, Company Commanders, and Platoon Leaders while performing their duties in Infantry and Armor Battalions.

#### Personal Data

1. Branch \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Rank \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Age \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Length of commissioned service \_\_\_\_\_ (yrs.).
5. Source of commission \_\_\_\_\_ (OCS, ROTC, USMA, other—specify).
6. Education:
  - a. High School \_\_\_\_\_ (yrs.).
  - b. College \_\_\_\_\_ (yrs.). Degree \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Military experience. Indicate type and length of experience by writing in the appropriate blanks the length of time, in months, that you have served in each position.

	Combat	Type Unit (Inf, Mech Inf, Armor)	Noncombat	Type Unit (Inf, Mech Inf, Armor)
Battalion Commander	_____	_____	_____	_____
Battalion XO	_____	_____	_____	_____
Battalion Staff	_____	_____	_____	_____
Co. Commander	_____	_____	_____	_____
Platoon Leader	_____	_____	_____	_____

**NOTE:** This questionnaire is an anonymous survey of opinions and respondents will not be identified in any way. Please answer frankly and honestly, based on your personal opinion and experience.

Below is a list of actions that refers to leaders at Battalion level or lower. Please rate each of the actions described for its desirability as an action of a Battalion Commander, Company Commander, or Platoon Leader, according to the following scale:

1. Very undesirable
2. Undesirable
3. Slightly undesirable
4. Slightly desirable
5. Desirable
6. Very desirable



Rate each action by placing a number indicating its degree of desirability (based on the rating scale given above) for a Battalion Commander, for a Company Commander, and for a Platoon Leader in the blank space next to each position.

Examples:

1. Appears at Officers' Club "Happy Hour" on Fridays.

\_\_\_\_\_ Battalion Commander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Company Commander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Platoon Leader

19. Provides information about the task or mission.

\_\_\_\_\_ Battalion Commander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Company Commander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Platoon Leader

28. Asks for opinions of subordinates.

\_\_\_\_\_ Battalion Commander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Company Commander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Platoon Leader

If you thought that the above was a *Desirable* action of a Battalion Commander, then you would place the number five (5) in the blank, since 5 indicates the response *Desirable*. The process would then be repeated for the action as it refers to Company Commanders and Platoon Leaders and the appropriate number response placed in the blank space provided.